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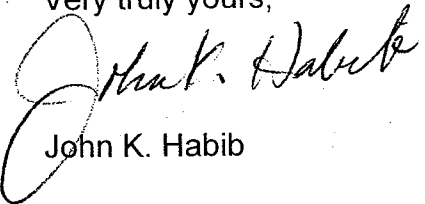
Mary L. Cottrell, Secretary  
Department of Telecommunications and Energy  
One South Station, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

RE: D.T.E. 04-116- Investigation by the Department of Telecommunications and Energy On Its Own Motion Regarding the Service Quality Guidelines Established in Service Quality Standards for Electric Distribution Companies and Local Gas Distribution Companies, D.T.E. 99-84 (2001)

Dear Secretary Cottrell:

Please find attached the responses of New England Gas Company (the "Company") to the Department of Telecommunications and Energy's First Set of Information Requests to All Participants in the above-referenced proceeding. Please contact me or Kevin Penders at the Company if you have any questions regarding the responses.

Very truly yours,



John K. Habib

Enclosure

cc: Service List  
Jody Stiefel  
Kevin Penders  
Peter Czekanski  
Joseph Rogers

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY**

**FIRST SET OF INFORMATION REQUESTS OF  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY TO  
ALL PARTICIPANTS**

D.T.E. 04-116

**RESPONSES OF NEW ENGLAND GAS COMPANY**

Persons Responsible:

Karen Czaplewski, Vice President, Customer Service  
Richard Enright, Director, Customer Field Service

Information Request DTE-A 1-1

Regarding customer notice and customer service guarantees, please describe the following:

- a) the process that would be required (1) to ensure accurate notification of planned interruptions to customers on the affected circuit, and (2) to accurately track and provide a customer credit to all affected customers of record; and
- b) any proposed new process to ensure accurate appointment notification, rescheduling appointment, and credit for service appointment service guarantee.

Response

- a) Because this portion of the information request seeks information regarding electric company issues, New England Gas Company defers to the Massachusetts electric companies and other interested participants to respond to this question.
- b) The Company has provided as Attachment DTE-A-1-1 (New England Gas) the Company's Operating Methods and Procedures for notification, tracking, and reporting of service appointments, guarantee credits, customer complaints, billing adjustments, call center statistics, and meter reads. This policy has been in place since September 16, 2004 and is accompanied by sample forms of the Company's Customer Service Guarantee Report, the Company's letter to customers relative to the appointment guarantee, and the Company's letter to customers relative to the outage guarantee.

In addition to the attached materials, the Company takes several steps to ensure that customer appointments are met and tracked in an accurate and timely basis. When contacted by the customer to set up an appointment, the customer is given a choice of four appointment time frames (AM, PM, EVE and All Day). The order is then scheduled for the agreed-upon appointment time frame through our scheduling system. When the work order prints out, the appointment time frame is printed on the order for the dispatcher and technician to see. The dispatcher is trained to set the work up in a way that appointments are a priority, and their

performance is reviewed to ensure that appointments are satisfactorily monitored and met.

The Company's Workforce Management System has built-in alarms to notify the Dispatcher of at risk appointments. These alarms notify Company dispatchers of appointments that are not completed 30 minutes before the scheduled appointment time will end. This allows the dispatcher to reassign at risk appointments and ensure that the Company arrives within its appointed time frame.

If an emergency situation occurs and appointments cannot be met, dispatchers are trained to call and notify customers that their appointment will be missed. At this point, the option is provided to the customer to reschedule or wait until Company representatives arrive.

Appointments met are tracked on a weekly basis. All Missed Appointments are reviewed to determine whether an appointment was missed outside of the Department's Guidelines of four hours. If so, the order is forwarded to the Billing Department for the processing of the \$25.00 credit owed to the Customer.

Given the Company's processes described above, no new processes are being proposed at this time relative to appointment notification, rescheduling of appointments, and credit application for service appointment guarantees.

# New England Gas Company

## Operating Methods and Procedures

<b>Subject:</b> Service Quality Measurements - Massachusetts	<b>Section No:</b> Other 9.01
<b>Section:</b> Other	<b>Approved by:</b> Karen Czaplewski

### 1. Responsible Parties

Dispatch Office: Cumberland  
 Meter Reading: North Attleboro and Fall River  
 Billing Department: Cumberland  
 Rates and Regulatory: Providence  
 Accounting: Providence

### 2. Related Report(s), Tables(s), and Systems

Customer Service Guarantee Request Form  
 Letters (2)

### 3. Procedure / Process Discussion

All services quality benchmarks and monthly reporting statistics must be reported separately for Fall River and North Attleboro to the Massachusetts DTE.

#### A. Service Appointments Met

The dispatch office for Fall River and North Attleboro, located in Cumberland, tracks all service appointments by AM, PM, evening or all day. Service appointments met as scheduled are the number of service calls met on the day requested and scheduled, excluding appointments missed by the customer. Those missed by the Customer are excluded from the numerator and denominator when calculating the appointments met. If the appointment is met within the same day as originally scheduled, it is not included as an appointment missed. It is counted as met as scheduled. These statistics are provided to Manager, Operations Budget and Manager, Regulatory Relations each month. The backup for the computed statistics is made available to Manager, Operations Budget and Manager, Regulatory Relations as requested.

#### B. Service Appointment Guarantee Credit

When a service appointment as described in the previous paragraph is missed by more than 4 hours due to operational constraints, the customer is issued a \$25 service appointment guarantee credit. These service appointment guarantees are recorded on the Customer Service Guarantee Request form (see attached) by Dispatch and submitted to the Billing Department (to the attention of the Billing Supervisor). The Billing Department issues the \$25 credit as appropriate and notes the appropriate Banner screens with comments to reflect the service appointment guarantee credit. The Billing Department Clerk will attempt to contact the Customer via telephone to inform them of the \$25 credit being issued to them. The message will be as documented in the attached letter 1. Additionally, the Billing Clerk mails this letter to the Customer's most recent mailing address.

#### C. Service Outage Guarantee Credit

# New England Gas Company

## Operating Methods and Procedures

<b>Subject:</b> Service Quality Measurements - Massachusetts	<b>Section No:</b> Other 9.01
<b>Section:</b> Other	<b>Approved by:</b> Karen Czaplewski

Customers are notified in advance of all scheduled service outages. Should the Company fail to notify the affected customers in advance, the customers are issued a \$25 service outage guarantee credit. The Customer Service Guarantee Request form (see attached) must be completed and forwarded to the Billing Department (currently to the attention of Rose Rosa). The Billing Department issues the \$25 credit as appropriate and notes the appropriate Banner screens with comments to reflect the service outage guarantee credit. The Billing Department Clerk will attempt to contact the Customer via telephone to inform them of the \$25 credit being issued to them. The message should be as documented in the attached letter 2. Additionally, the Billing Clerk mails this letter to the Customer's most recent mailing address.

### D. Consumer Complaints

The Massachusetts DTE notifies the Rates and Regulatory Department of consumer complaints on a monthly basis. The list of complaints includes customer name, address, and account number and is forwarded by the Rates and Regulatory Department to the Credit and Collections Department, currently to the attention of Tom Gagnon. Credit and Collections confirms that these are residential customers for which we have record of filing a consumer complaint with the Division. Any discrepancies are discussed with the appropriate individual(s) at the Consumer Division of Massachusetts DTE and the Rates and Regulatory Department is informed of the status.

### E. Billing Adjustments

The Massachusetts DTE provides a monthly list of billing adjustments that are ordered by them, to the Rates and Regulatory Department. This list is forwarded to the Billing and the Credit and Collections Department for confirmation. Any discrepancies are discussed with the Rates and Regulatory Department and with the Consumer Division of Massachusetts DTE, if deemed appropriate.

### F. Percentage Of Actual Meter Reads

Percentage of Actual Meter Reads is compiled by the various Meter Reading Department personnel and provided to the division meter reading supervisor, (currently Bob Hines). The results are then provided to Rates and Regulatory (currently Manager, Regulatory Relations) and Customer Field Service Analyst (currently Manager, Operations Budget). All supporting documentation is made available to all of these individuals upon request.

### G. Call Center Statistics

The Business Analyst tracks phone data for the Call Center during regular business hours, using reports supplied by the BCMS system in Cumberland and the Centervu Supervisor system in Providence on a daily basis. The following items are tracked:

1. Number of calls answered.

# New England Gas Company

## Operating Methods and Procedures

<b>Subject:</b> Service Quality Measurements - Massachusetts	<b>Section No:</b> Other 9.01
<b>Section:</b> Other	<b>Approved by:</b> Karen Czaplewski

2. Number of calls abandoned.
3. Average speed of answer.
4. Percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds. The percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds is defined as:
  - The Number of calls answered within 20 seconds divided by
  - The Number of incoming calls.

The Business Analyst also tracks these same 4 statistics listed above for all emergency calls on a 24-hour basis.

The Business Analyst provides this data to Rates and Regulatory on a monthly basis or as requested.

#### 4. Retention of Records

Reports with appropriate back up are retained by Rates and Regulatory in accordance with their record retention policy.

Call Center stats are retained by the Customer Service Business Analyst in accordance with their record retention policy.

Billing records are retained by the Billing Department in accordance with their record retention policy.

Meter Reading records are retained by the Meter Reading and Billing Departments in accordance with their record retention policy.

*New England Gas Company*  
***Customer Service Guarantee Request***

**Submitted By:**

**Submitted To: Customer Accounting**

The Fall River and North Attleboro divisions of The New England Gas Company will provide customer service guarantees for the following customer service measures: (1) failure to keep service appointments within four hours; and (2) failure to notify customers regarding planned service outages. The Company guarantees that if it either fails to keep a service appointment with a customer or fails to notify a customer of a planned service interruption, it will credit the customer \$25.

Reason: please check the appropriate box

☐

Failure to keep service appointment

☐

Failure to notify customer of planned service outage

Please provide the following customer information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Meter Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Incidence Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

By: (Name)

Date:

Management Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Guarantee (Service or Street): \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Applied (Customer Billing): \_\_\_\_\_

Comments Entered into Banner  
(Customer Billing) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Detail: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Customer Letter re Service Outage Guarantee Credit

Note: Letter assumes that the Billing Department has spoken with the customer to explain the reason for the Service Outage Guarantee Credit. If unable to reach the customer by telephone first, the word “confirm”, should be substituted with “inform you”.

(Insert Date)

(Insert Name)

(Insert Street Address)

(Insert City, State and Zip)

Dear Valued Customer:

I am writing to confirm that you will soon receive a \$25 credit due to the fact that your natural gas service was recently interrupted without advance notice. New England Gas Company was performing maintenance work in your area, and you should have been notified that your natural gas service would be unavailable during this time. Please accept our apology for any inconvenience. For your reference, the “Service Outage Guarantee Credit” will appear on your next bill, in the section titled “INSERT SECTION TITLE.”

Please contact New England Gas Company at (800) 544-4944 should you have any questions regarding this matter.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Employee Name  
Billing Department Supervisor



## Customer Letter re Service Appointment Guarantee Credit

Note: Letter assumes that the Billing Department has spoken with the customer to explain the reason for the Service Appointment Guarantee Credit. If unable to reach the customer by telephone first, the word “confirm”, should be substituted with “inform you”.

(Insert Date)

(Insert Name)

(Insert Street Address)

(Insert City, State and Zip)

Dear Valued Customer:

I am writing to confirm that you will soon receive a \$25 credit due to the fact that we recently missed a service appointment, which was scheduled for (INSERT DATE AND TIME PERIOD). Regrettably, we were unable to keep this appointment. Please accept our apology for any inconvenience. For your reference, the “Service Appointment Guarantee Credit” will appear on your next bill, in the section titled “INSERT SECTION TITLE.”

Please contact New England Gas Company at (800) 544-4944 should you have any questions regarding this matter.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Employee Name

Billing Department Supervisor

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY**

FIRST SET OF INFORMATION REQUESTS OF  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY TO  
ALL PARTICIPANTS  
D.T.E. 04-116

RESPONSES OF NEW ENGLAND GAS COMPANY

Dated: May 3, 2005

Respondent: Kevin Penders, Manager, Regulatory Relations

Information Request DTE-A 1-2

Regarding standardization of service quality benchmarks, please identify those service quality measures that could be standardized on a statewide basis.

Explain.

Response

As stated in the Company's Comments at 22-25, and Reply Comments at 4, and echoing the comments made by the other local distribution companies ("LDCs") (see Bay State Comments at 8-9; Berkshire Comments at 13; Fitchburg Comments at 8-9; KeySpan Comments at 21-24; National Grid Comments at 7; NSTAR Comments at 26-28; WMECo Comments at 7-8), the Company continues to support the findings of Navigant Consulting, Inc., as provided in their report entitled Summary of Findings Related to Service Quality Benchmarking Efforts (December 19, 2002) ("Navigant Report"). The Navigant Report concluded that inherent differences among the utilities made it virtually impossible to establish standardized performance benchmarks that would have validity in terms measuring the performance of a specific Massachusetts-based utility. Therefore, with exception to the benchmark for Response to Odor Calls, which LDCs currently measure via a standardized 95 percent benchmark, the Company is unable to identify any service quality measures that should be standardized on a statewide basis. The Department should continue to allow LDCs to measure their service quality performance against their historical performance rather than a uniform but arbitrarily established statewide benchmark.

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**RESPONSES OF NEW ENGLAND GAS COMPANY**

Dated: May 3, 2005

Respondent: Kevin Penders, Manager, Regulatory Relations

**Information Request DTE-A 1-3**

Please refer to the existing Service Quality Guidelines, Attachment 1, at 15-16, where the electric distribution companies are required to report outage information.

- a) Comment on whether the required outage information in the Service Quality Guidelines is adequate and correlates to the outage information that local electric distribution companies maintain and use for calculating service quality calculation, including system average interruption duration index ("SAIDI"), system average interruption frequency index ("SAIFI"), customer average interruption frequency index, and momentary average interruption frequency;
- b) If the required outage information is not considered adequate, please provide a list of additional outage information that would be necessary to correlate to the outage information used in the service quality calculation.

**Response**

Because this information request seeks information regarding electric company reliability issues, New England Gas Company defers to the Massachusetts electric companies and other interested participants to respond to this question.

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY**

**FIRST SET OF INFORMATION REQUESTS OF  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY TO  
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**RESPONSES OF NEW ENGLAND GAS COMPANY**

Dated: May 3, 2005

Respondent: Kevin Penders, Manager, Regulatory Relations

**Information Request DTE-A 1-4**

Regarding the proposed IEEE Standard 1366-2003, please explain:

- a) its level of conformance to the level of minimum performance required under the existing Service Quality Guidelines, i.e., performance level should not be below those levels that existed in 1997 or the existing SAIDI and SAIFI benchmarks;
- b) whether this proposed IEEE standard meets the statutory requirement of minimum performance measurements; and
- c) whether this standard provides an incentive for local electric distribution companies to avoid minimizing interruption durations once the threshold hits a low point and window for the excludable events increase.

**Response**

Because this information request seeks information regarding electric company reliability issues, New England Gas Company defers to the Massachusetts electric companies and other interested participants to respond to this question.